

San Jose State University 150th Anniversary

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SPARTAN DAILY

Football team loses seven scholarships

ERIC ZIMMERLING
STAFF WRITER

Historical penalties on players that did not fulfill their scholarship commitments have cost the San Jose State University football team seven scholarships this season, said Tom Hastings, assistant athletics director at SJSU.

“There were athletes on the football team that coach Tomey kept on scholarship that were no longer playing football, but he kept them on scholarship so these students could graduate,” Hastings said. “Those athletes did not live up to their commitments and that is where the bulk of the penalties are coming from.”

The names of the players have not been released.

Three scholarship penalties were assessed in the spring recruiting cycle when SJSU had only 22 scholarships to offer, instead of the usual 25 for division 1A football programs, Hastings said. He said the four other scholarships will be lost by not replacing those whose eligibility has expired.

The penalties are based on NCAA sanctioned academic

progress reports that took place during the 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 seasons that judged the sports team’s graduation rate, eligibility and fulfillment of scholarships, Hastings said.

Also affecting a team’s academic progress report are players that are drafted by a National Football League team but who do not graduate.

“Drafted players that are scholarship athletes and do not graduate have a point impact towards the overall score,” Hastings said. “However, if they come back and graduate, then it does not have any impact at all.”

According to a story published by the San Jose Mercury News, Coach Dick Tomey does not feel that the scholarships lost will have a huge impact on the team.

Sean Dunden, a junior majoring in business and a member of the SJSU cross-country team, said he doesn’t feel that the lost scholarships will have an impact on the sports program at SJSU.

“Our cross-country team received a warning and that was

see FOOTBALL, page 3

Buddy Guy headlines Blues Fest



PHOTOS BY HANNA THRASHER/ STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

ABOVE: Legendary blues musician Buddy Guy performed Saturday at the 27th annual Metro Fountain Blues Festival. RIGHT: Sista Monica from Santa Cruz brought soul to the 27th annual Metro Fountain Blues Festival, Saturday at San Jose State University.

Crowd fills San Carlos Plaza at 27th festival

MARK POWELL
STAFF WRITER

More than 7,000 people flooded San Carlos Plaza at San Jose State University Saturday to experience the 27th annual Metro Fountain Blues Festival, headlined by Rock and Roll Hall of Fame guitarist Buddy Guy.

“I can’t think of a better way to kick off the summer,” said Michael Tabayonyon, a senior majoring in business finance.

Blues Festival producer Ted Gehrke said the actual attendance total for the eight-hour event had not yet been determined because some of the entrance turnstiles were not functioning properly.

However, Gehrke said the festival had very few problems overall and was “as smoothly-handled for any show I’ve produced or maybe seen.”

After five opening acts played to a sun-drenched crowd from 12 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Guy took the stage to a sea of people standing shoulder-to-shoulder along San Carlos Plaza.

The 70-year-old Guy was dressed casually in light blue jeans, a blue denim shirt and a dark blue bucket hat.

Nearly every move he made or phrase he spoke drew loud cheers from the audience.

“The guy is a consummate entertainer,” Gehrke said. “He had people dancing.”

With his eyes on the crowd, Guy played his guitar and spouted out a set that included covers of Cream’s “Strange Brew” and Jimi Hendrix’s “Voodoo Chile.”

Guy also played his own version of Wilson Pickett’s “Mustang Sally,” with the crowd responding without fail each time during the song’s chorus, “Ride, Sally, ride!”

Guy picked chords with his teeth, strummed the strings behind his back, rubbed his guitar on his backside and coerced half a song with the guitar between his legs — all to loud cheers and applause.

“I love coming out here to California,” Guy said after the show. “I mean, you guys have the fog and the earthquakes but that’s OK. I was born in Louisiana, but having lived in Chicago, all you need there is boots and a snow shovel.”

see BLUES, page 6



Professors hoop it up to deflate stress

Four SJSU faculty members started tradition in 1960

ROSSA DOÑO
STAFF WRITER

San Jose State University has been home to the NBA for 47 years.

With jokes, laughs, an indefinite amount of stories and an overall love for basketball, several staff, faculty and administrators have gotten together every week in the Yoshiro Uchida Gym since October of 1960, when four SJSU faculty founded the Noontime Basketball Association, or NBA.

“The beauty of noontime basketball is that it’s the perfect outlet for stress,” said Richard Pfaff through e-mail, who has worked in the Scholarship and Financial Aid Office for 30 years and is the league’s official record keeper. “It combines physical exercise and psychic release. The air is filled with primal screams and trash talking.

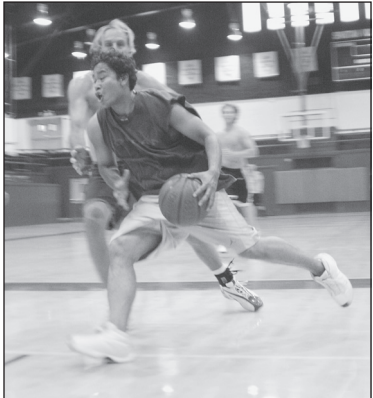


PHOTO BY LAUREN SAGAR/ STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

ABOVE: Kim Sun, a student services employee, makes his way past Matt Buchanan, a friend of one of the faculty members, at Friday’s Noontime Basketball Association game.

“Everybody gets a good workout, then camaraderie ... in the locker room, then back to work, feeling like a new person.”

Playing at about noon, Monday-through-Friday, the players

see NBA, page 3

Gulf Project members to travel to D.C.

ERIC ZIMMERLING
STAFF WRITER

A significant portion of New Orleans was flooded, more than a thousand people lost their lives and thousands more people are still in physical and financial trouble as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

The Gulf Coast Civil Works Project knows this.

Scott Myers-Lipton, a professor at San Jose State University, started the organization last year, which now includes students from 43 colleges from around the country.

The organization’s goal is to pass federal legislation that would create 100,000 jobs for rebuilding communities in the Gulf Coast that were ravaged by Hurricane Katrina, Myers-Lipton said.

Congressman Bennie G. Thompson of Mississippi, who is also the chair of the House Homeland Security Committee, invited Myers-Lipton to speak in Washington D.C. at the House of Representatives in support of the legislation.

“In the next three or four weeks, I’ll be going to Washington,” Myers-Lipton said. “I will be speaking out there in support of the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project, and I am hoping to bring

some students from around the country to support as well.”

Myers-Lipton also said that events will take place at the start of next semester to recognize the two-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

“To mark the anniversary we will be setting up some events at the start of next semester,” Myers-Lipton said. “We’re organizing some things with the colleges participating around the nation in our project.”

Kwane Thomas, a senior majoring in business, went with the group in January to the Gulf

see GULF, page 3

SJSU kinesiology major inspired by parents’ disabilities

ERIC ZIMMERLING
STAFF WRITER

Adam Elix, a junior at San Jose State University, spends his Saturday afternoons in a wheelchair and says he feels right at home.

His mother Jan became an incomplete quadriplegic at the age of 11 after sustaining injuries from a diving accident.

His father Mike became an incomplete paraplegic in his mid-20s after sus-

taining injuries from a skydiving accident. An incomplete injury means that only a portion of the spinal cord has been damaged, therefore allowing some messages to get through from the brain to the muscles or from the muscles and skin to the brain, Elix said.

Elix, who is able-bodied, said both parents have feeling in all extremities. His mother is confined to a wheelchair to get around while his father

see ELIX, page 3



PHOTO BY ERIC ZIMMERLING/ STAFF WRITER

ABOVE: Adam Elix, a junior majoring in kinesiology, teaches children with disabilities how to play sports through a program called Wheels on Fire at the Camden Community Center in San Jose.

WHAT'S THE DEAL:

It took a little extra time, but goodbye SJSU; I will miss you



MICHAEL GESLANI

Since 2001, San Jose State University has made drastic changes for me.

That's the year I started at SJSU, and I've seen quite a few things and have had some of the best times of my life.

My first year of college had its upside, I met some really good friends that I still hang out with today and learned a lot about myself.

I pledged for a fraternity — something I don't ever regret doing. Although I'm not active anymore, I still find time to check in with the guys.

I pledged with my friend from high school and someone who I never met before, and we still find time to hangout.

One is on his way to getting married while the other one is squirming his way into a new career, as he likes to call it.

Through the fraternity, I was able to be active with school life and met many people who I can now call my friends. These guys I can always count on for support.

A couple years later I was going to school part-time and working to pay off that thing called imaginary money, but it was actually just a stupid piece of plastic I like to call a credit card.

Every time I use a credit card I feel like I'm selling my soul to the devil.

After getting rid of that burden, I was able to focus more heavily on school-work and try to finish up.

I thought I would never finish school, until I was inspired to by one friend who told me he had to leave school for a while to work, but he still vowed he would finish — but not on the four-year plan that everyone hopes to achieve.

Throughout school for the last couple of years I have been able to be a staff writer and editor on the newspaper and work as an intern for Spartan Athletics the summer right before our football team won the bowl game.

These were two experiences that made this school year fun, and I sure did learn a lot.

This all happened in the last school year.

I had filled out my application for graduation, but that wasn't enough assurance to make actually having my diploma in my hand.

It didn't begin to dawn on me that I would be leaving SJSU in a couple weeks until I finished my last

10-page paper last week. I probably won't miss that as much as the extra-curricular activities, but I won't forget working until 6 a.m. to finish them.

Not everyone fulfills his or her requirements in four years, but more power to you if you do. As for some of us, the reason it takes

more time is because we have other obligations.

What my friend told me was that as long as you finish college everything would be great. I knew I wanted to finish college.

I already made it a commitment after filing for my major three years into my college life, but I didn't know how long it would take.

At this point I worked double-time to get out of

here. It worked. I'm finally leaving here but not without the memories I have and the things I've learned.

So it took me six years, so what? I honestly doubt I would have been ready for a career after four years if I had worked hard and finished that quickly.

What I did in that six years was learn, and I'm still learning.

So don't let the time commitment of four years of college set you back.

It's possible to finish school in the time frame, but if you can, live a little and let loose. Have fun but also work hard — you'll get there sooner or later.

I'm not perfect but I know I'm capable of taking things to the next level now. I've been applying for jobs in the last couple of weeks with little luck, but I can say I'm ready for anything.

Thanks to all who had support for me; I've definitely had the support for you and all SJSU students as well. I'm going to miss my time here at SJSU.

Michael Geslani is the Spartan Daily opinion editor. This is

SPARTA GUIDE

Write letters to the editor and submit Sparta Guide information online. Visit our Web site at www.thespartandaily.com. You may also submit information in writing to DBH 209.

Sparta Guide is provided free of charge to students, faculty and staff members. The deadline for entries is noon, three working days before the desired publication date. Space restrictions may require editing of submissions. Entries are printed in the order in which they are received.

Today

SJSU Catholic Campus Ministry

The SJSU Catholic Campus Ministry will be holding a Daily Mass at 12:10 p.m. in the SJSU Catholic Campus Ministry Center. For more information, contact Jose Rubio at (408) 938-1610.

Weekly Meditation Workshop

Join Counseling Services for its Weekly Meditation Workshop from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Administration building, room 201. For more information, contact Mark Forman at (408) 924-5910.

Disabled Students' Weekly Discussion

Join Counseling Services for the Disabled Students' Weekly Discussion from 3 to 4:20 p.m. in the Administration building, room 201. For more information, contact Kell Fujimoto at (408) 924-5910.

Test-taking Preparation

From 6 to 7 p.m. in Campus Village Building B there will be a one-hour test taking preparation session. For more information about "Help me! I can't remember that answer!" contact georgette.gale@sjsu.edu.

Tuesday

SJSU Catholic Campus Ministry

The SJSU Catholic Campus Ministry will be holding a "Hour of Power — Rosary Prayer Night," at 8 p.m. in the SJSU Catholic Campus

Ministry Center. For more information, contact Kay Polintan at (408) 938-1610.

The Listening Hour Concert Series

Join the School of Music and Dance for "Small Jazz Ensemble" from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. in the Music Building Concert Hall. For more information, contact Joan Stubbe at (408) 924-4673.

Wednesday

Women's Weekly Discussion

Join Counseling Services for the Women's Weekly Discussion from 1 to 2:20 p.m. in the Administration building, room 201. For more information, contact Beverly Floresca at (408) 924-5910.

Men's Weekly Discussion

Join Counseling Services for the Men's Weekly Discussion from 3 to 4:20 p.m. in the Administration building, room 201. For more information, contact Kell Fujimoto at (408) 924-5910.

QTIP

The Queers Thoughtfully Interrupting Prejudice will be holding its general meeting from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Student Union Almaden room. For more information, e-mail mastavic@mastavic.com.

GUEST COLUMN:

All we want is dirty laundry



KEVIN RAND

The line that separates news from entertainment is disappearing rapidly.

Celebrity sound bites and video clips have become the new front pages of the 21st century.

I'm so sick of seeing the stuff that even writing about it makes me feel uneasy.

A few weeks ago we heard Alec Baldwin go ape in a voicemail message to his 11-year-old daughter.

I first heard it on sports talk radio during my morning drive to school.

My first thought, "Are you freaking kidding me?"

I knew this was going to be the topic du jour around the water cooler.

But really, the conversations should not have gone like this:

"It's sad that voicemail got released. That's so embarrassing."

"I know. Alec Baldwin has some anger issues."

"Yeah. Poor girl. I wonder what she did to make him go off like that?"

The real conversation should go more like:

"Hey FOX News, MSNBC, Google News, 'Extra,' 'Entertainment Tonight'! Get your heads out of the sand and stop showing this stuff. We don't need it."

And the most recent video — the one taped by, once again, another young daughter — captured a totally wasted, shirtless David Hasselhoff eating a Wendy's burger while sitting on the floor.

I understand that with the status of celebrity comes a certain amount of responsibility, but come on, what we're seeing here is pathetic. And when I say pathetic, I'm not talking about the drunken 'Hoff, I'm talking about whichever news organization decided to air that footage.

And they treated it just like any other story with the panelists, the analysts, the shrinks, the sociologists. Blah, blah, blah.

"Susie, from Rhonert Park, you're on the air."

"Yes. I just want to say that David Hasselhoff should not be allowed to judge on "America's Got Talent" this season because ... blah, blah, BLAH."

Any news organization that considers these celebrity meltdowns news should never be allowed to use the word journalism with reference to the garbage they are hurling.

But this is where we are, and this is how far we've come.

Paris, Lindsay, Britney, Rehab 90210.

Divorces, marriages, adoptions, DUIs.

Gossip is not news.

Hey, if you want to watch it — and I admit, I Googled "Britney shaved head" — go right ahead.

It's just that this kind of stuff needs a new category. It does not belong on CNN or in the Los Angeles Times.

I think "America's Funniest Home Videos" is still on the air. Are they still giving out \$15,000 to the first-prize winner?

I guess the optimist in me believes that we really will get tired of celebrity gossip, or at least when it's disguised as news.

We are a society of rubber neckers. We like train wrecks. We like watching Mike Tyson eat ears.

"Hey FOX News, MSNBC, Google News, 'Extra,' 'Entertainment Tonight'! Get your heads out of the sand and stop showing this stuff. ... "

I think we always will be fascinated with sex, violence, money and gossip; but I think the news consumer will eventually realize what is happening to the industry.

This flood of sideshow-style journalism is recent, and we are simply trend-happy consumers for the moment.

I truly hope that one day, if I ever have kids, the newspapers they read won't be headlined with the year 2020 version of Olsen-twins gossip.

If that is the direction in which we are headed, it will be a sad, sad day.

We will have forgotten about what is important. We will not care about those things that matter to society.

Money will dominate journalism more than ever, and the advertisers will be laughing all the way to the bank.

Kevin Rand is a Spartan Daily staff writer. This is the last guest column that will appear for the Spartan Daily 2007 spring semester.

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A letter to the editor is a response to an issue or a point of view that has appeared in the Spartan Daily.

Only letters between 200 to 400 words will be considered for publication.

Submissions become property of the Spartan Daily and may be edited for clarity, grammar, libel and length. Submissions must contain the author's name, address, phone number, signature and major.

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NBA- Players get good workout, build camaraderie

Continued from page 1

of the Noontime Basketball Association play five-on-five, skins versus shirts, and call their own fouls, said William Reckmeyer, a professor of anthropology and leadership and systems at SJSU, through e-mail.

Robert Wilson, one of the founders of the league, said when he, Mike McIntyre, Charlie Burdick and Robert Roberts first played in the gym, they didn't even know how to turn on the lights. But as time progressed, they got more players to join, more time to play, and because the gym was sometimes occupied at game times, they've played on almost every court on campus.

"Here you're a basketball player," Wilson said. "You're not a school president. You're not a philosopher. You're a would-be basketball or a basketball player."

Playing with whomever shows up that day, different players show up on different days.

"Some people teach around noon, some have meetings or are out of town," said Larry Blitz, who has played in the Noon-time Basketball Association since 1979, "but we still play Monday through Friday all-year-round.



PHOTO BY LAUREN SAGAR/
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

ABOVE: Stephen Kay, an assistant professor for education leadership, watches Greg Rehmke, a graduate student studying economics, jump to make a basket at Friday's Noontime Basketball game in the Yoshihiro Uchida Hall Gym.

There's only about five or six days out of the year we miss."

With about 300 people who have come in and out of the league, SJSU's Noontime Basketball Association welcomes both men and women, said founder Wilson.

Stan Butler, a professor of kinesiology, recalled one of his first times playing basketball with the noontime players 18 years ago and being told to guard a Stanford women's basketball player.

"So I'm brand new and I'm thinking I'm in top shape," Butler said. "I can run with anybody, and I about died. I was bent over, I was so tired. And this player is just hitting (three pointers) all day on me. ... I grew up in Missouri, so I was coming from back East and I didn't know who this player is I'm guarding.

"Here you are a basketball player. You're not a school president. You're not a philosopher. You're a would-be ... basketball player."

-Robert Wilson, league founder

"Afterward, everyone was like, 'she hit 90 percent of her points, you can't guard her' and I said, 'Well not today anyway,' and I'm thinking I'm better than this. Well, then they told me it was Jennifer Azzi the All-American from Stanford they had me guarding."

One of many stories, all types of players have come through to play out with SJSU's faculty, staff and administration.

Wilson said that coaches, graduate students who played for the 49ers, All-Americans and occasionally some students have come through the gym to play.

William Hanna, a professor of elementary in education said, "You get to be a 12 year old again. You don't think of anything else — just basketball."

Football- Scholarship losses are retroactive penalties

Continued from page 1

it," Dunden said. "The football team has so many scholarships available that it probably won't hurt the team that much."

Hastings, the assistant athletic director at SJSU, said that these penalties are a one-time issue and that the problem should resolve itself by next year.

Elix- Student works with program to keep mom's legacy alive

Continued from page 1

uses crutches as well as a wheelchair to play sports.

From the time he could remember, Elix said he knew that his family was unlike that of his friends' families.

"I knew it was a little bit different," Elix said. "Growing up I knew that my parents were not like other parents. It was just a little weird at times. I knew that my friends and I weren't going to play basketball, baseball or football with my parents. Instead we would hop in my mom's chair and race around the house."

Many modifications were made to their home to make it more wheelchair-accessible, Elix said.

"We redid the deck in the backyard and created ramps that made the front door accessible," Elix said. "The cupboards are on rollers, the fans have remotes, light switches were lowered and my mom's bathroom was completely remodeled."

"Adam has made a huge impact on my life."

-Anna Ryan, Saratoga High School student

School field trips for Elix were not like other students' either.

"We couldn't really take many of my friends with us a lot of times because my mom would drive me. Her chair would be in the back, and there wasn't a lot of room for others."

Elix said that everyday routines could often turn into challenges at times.

"I would say I did more chores

than the average kids," Elix said. "But I never looked at it that way. This was my family and this is the only thing I knew. My mom would come home from work and cook dinner just like any other mom."

At around age nine, Elix said he began volunteering with the Office of Therapeutic Services, a program run by the City of San Jose that offers adapted sports for persons with disabilities — a program that his mother supervised until 2005.

"OTS has been running a two-week overnight sports camp at San Jose State every summer since 1983, and I think I am the mascot for the camp," Elix said jokingly. "When I was nine or 10 I would help push the kids in their chairs, set up for camp and really got to know these kids. A lot of them come back every year, I don't look at them as kids in wheelchairs. They are all my friends."

Anna Ryan, a 17-year-old student at Saratoga High School that has spina bifida — which, according to the Spina Bifida Association's Web site, is a "neural tube defect that happens in the first month of pregnancy when the spinal column doesn't close completely" — has been attending OTS programs for 12 years.

"Adam has made a huge impact on my life," Ryan said. "He is always there for us. I have known him for 12 years and he has been a great person since I met him. He is so easy to talk to."

Even with the extraordinary amount of exposure Elix had in the lives of disabled persons, he said he was not sure that he would work in this field as his career profession.

"Growing up, I wanted to be a cop or firefighter — the traditional work that a lot of kids want to do. I had fun playing sports with these kids. I didn't really see it as work."

available for all student athletes, Hastings said.

In a statement to the Spartan Daily, Bowen said, "Academic success is our first and foremost priority and we will continue to push forward. This isn't something we can solve overnight but it is something we are committed to daily.

"I've said before that our goal

is to exceed the NCAA's academic benchmark. A number of our programs are doing so currently, and we will work tirelessly toward all 16 programs achieving that goal."

Coach Tomey has also excused a couple of student athletes from spring practice to focus solely on their academics, Hastings said.

"I am still working with persons with disabilities which is great, but my mom is my inspiration."

-Adam Elix, junior, kinesiology

But as the years progressed, Elix increasingly became more involved in the Office of Therapeutic Services program and was employed there at the age of 16.

He began working at various programs that included adapted bowling, a diabetes camp and Wheels on Fire, a program that teaches children with disabilities how to play various types of sports.

In 2004, Elix was still working with the program while taking classes at West Valley College while he was trying to figure out his future.

In August of that same year, he said things cleared up for him through a devastating piece of news. His mother had been diagnosed with bladder cancer.

Looking past the pain, Elix stayed dedicated to his "friends" by working the full two weeks at the wheelchair sports summer camp held at San Jose State University.

"I wanted to be there," Elix said. "It was difficult because I needed to take care of my mom but I wanted to be at camp as well. My mind wasn't there all the time, and it was hard to focus but I dropped in and out and made sure I was there."

In August of that same year, Elix's mother died.

In 2007, Elix became a therapeutic specialist for the Office of Therapeutic Services and is also

taking classes at SJSU toward an adapted physical activity degree in the kinesiology department.

"It is so important to me to keep my mom's legacy alive," Elix said. "My parents always wanted me to get a degree and that's the main reason why I'm doing it. I am still working with persons with disabilities which is great, but my mom is my inspiration."

Nancy Megginson, a professor in the kinesiology department who specializes in adapted physical exercise, has known Elix since he was 10 years old.

"It is kind of ironic now," Megginson said. "He is taking one of my classes this semester and I was doing a lecture on adapted sports and thinking to myself that he could be doing this right now — he knows all of this."

Megginson went on to say that Elix's compassion toward all individuals in life is "incredible."

"Adam is compassionate about individuals with disabilities and an extremely ethical person when it comes to fighting for those individuals. He is an incredible person," she said.

Elix said he is hoping to graduate in 2009.

All people are human beings. People in wheelchairs are the same as able-bodied people; they just have a different way of getting around, Elix said.

"They just have a much cooler mode of transportation — a much cooler pair of shoes than us," he said.

Elix is now supervising many of the same programs he used to volunteer for, including the Wheels on Fire.

Elix hops in a wheelchair every Saturday afternoon and teaches the program that his mother helped build, and he feels right at home doing it.

Gulf- Group is organizing fall semester awareness events

Continued from page 1

Coast to support the project in trying to pass federal legislation that would create 100,000 jobs for rebuilding communities.

"Close to nothing has been done over there," Thomas said. "It is everybody's responsibly to get our people in the Gulf Coast on their feet again. We can't all donate money or travel to the Gulf Coast, but we can march with the group on campus and participate in the other events that the group holds to raise awareness."

Victoria Chavez, a sophomore majoring in sociology, said the

group is also planning a rally in Washington if and when a bill is passed in the senate.

"We will be going to Washington over the summer to rally in hopes of passing the ... resolution and the legislation that supports what we're doing," he said.

Myers-Lipton spearheaded the organization after seeing the Spike Lee film "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Two Acts," a documentary on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"An entire region of our country was destroyed," Myers-Lipton said. "It's like having a human body without an arm, are you go-

ing to try and fix the arm or just leave it off? The area that was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina was the size of England, it's our job to help the people in the Gulf Coast heal."

Among the work the members

of the group have already done included a visit to the Gulf Coast, lobbying in Sacramento last week to pass federal legislation that would support their group and marching on campus to raise awareness about the project.

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SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

Student

PART 2

ATHLETES

inches from the finish line

ATHLETE: DANIELLE JOHNSON

Gymnast makes final pass at SJSU

Yael Reed Wachspress

STAFF WRITER

Danielle Johnson said although she is from California, she had no idea where San Jose State University was until her college quest began.

Johnson, now a graduating senior, is finishing her fourth season with the SJSU women's gymnastics team and specializes in vaulting.

"Dani wasn't a starter, but came into the gym everyday ..." said Wayne Wright, coach of the women's gymnastics team. "She did what she could do for the team and herself."

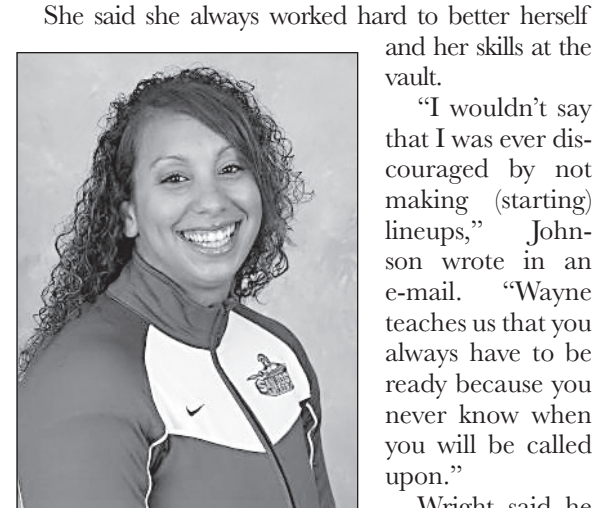


PHOTO COURTESY OF SJSU ATHLETICS

is proud that Johnson is graduating in four years.

"There is way too much that I am taking away from this experience then I can put into words," Johnson wrote. "Overall I would say that I don't think I would be the person

" ... I don't think I would be the person I am today without this experience. "

- Danielle Johnson, SJSU senior gymnast

I am today without this experience."

Johnson always considered herself a team player committed to gymnastics and will miss competing.

Johnson, who has done gymnastics since she was five, said the sport is a big commitment.

"I have no regrets at all," Johnson said. "Coming to San Jose State and joining the gymnastics team is definitely one of the best decisions I have ever made, and I couldn't imagine being anywhere else."

Johnson, who is majoring in child development, said that after graduation she plans to take a semester off before enrolling in SJSU's credential program.

"For now I just want to enjoy life without gymnastics," Johnson said. "I am currently trying to plan a trip to Spain."

ATHLETE: TRAE JACKSON

Football co-captain hopes to help less-fortunate children



ERIC ZIMMERLING

STAFF WRITER

Trae Jackson is the epitome of an elite student athlete. One of four co-captains of the San Jose State University football team, Jackson was also extremely active in the community.

The five-foot-nine-inch strong safety recorded nine tackles in 2007, a season that was highlighted by a win over the University of New Mexico in the New Mexico bowl for Jackson and the Spartans.

"My most memorable moment

of college football was winning that game," Jackson said. "It was a real accomplishment for us."

Jackson grew up in Los Angeles, Calif. where he lettered at Thomas Jefferson High School.

Jackson began his collegiate football career at Arizona State University where he red shirted in 2003 prior to coming to SJSU in 2004.

As the door is closing on his life here at SJSU, Jackson is looking to open another door back in his hometown of Los Angeles.

"I am looking to open a group home for under-privileged kids in Los Angeles after I graduate,"

Jackson said.

Terry McDonald, a psychology professor at SJSU, said Jackson was a great student and is an even better person.

"He did great in my classes," McDonald said. "It takes a lot to be a good student while having to get up early every day with his football commitments, and he balanced both well."

"He works with kids and does a lot of volunteering. He is a great role model."

Jackson was also the University's nominee for the Coca-Cola Community All-American program.

The program is designed to help institutions recognize, celebrate and applaud student-athletes who are making a difference in their communities.

In his career at SJSU, Jackson recorded 23 tackles and one quarterback sack. In 2005, Jackson recovered onside kicks in games against Utah State University and the University of Nevada.

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ATHLETE: CYNTHIA PINKNEY

Soccer player sees future in finance

DAVID ZUGNONI

STAFF WRITER

“Good things come out of horrible situations,” said senior Cynthia Pinkney, a native of Anaheim who transferred from Cypress College in 2004, after recalling her three seasons on the San Jose State University women’s soccer team.

She tore ligaments in her knee during a preseason game of her first season at SJSU, sidelining her from competitively for about six months and taking its toll on her body for the rest of her college career.

“I never fully recovered from that injury,” she said. “Mentally, physically, I just wasn’t that girl when I came up here.”

Despite her struggles, Pinkney said she would not trade any part of the past three years of her life because she made powerful relationships along the way.



PHOTO COURTESY SJSU ATHLETICS

While rehabilitating her knee in the SJSU Athletics training room, Pinkney met her future boyfriend, Ricky Saucedo, a former SJSU baseball player who was working out his injured shoulder.

She said she became close friends with teammates who were injured at the same time she was.

“I got to bond with all the people who were injured,” she said. “You start to understand how it feels to have your dream taken away from you, and it really brings you to a deeper friendship level.”

Meaghan Norbeck, Pinkney’s best friend and former teammate, said the constant pain of injury puts players in a position to lean on each other.

“It hurts every day,” said Norbeck, a senior majoring in sociology. “You want to play well and you can’t. You really need that moral support to let each other know it’s

going to be alright.”

Although she was plagued with injuries during her college career, Pinkney recalled a few shining on-the-field moments.

She said she will never forget a game at Fresno State University’s Senior Day, where the Spartans broke a scoreless tie in the game’s final moments and won 1-0.

“We hated (Fresno State). They hated us,” she said. “And we totally just watched them all cry on their senior day. It was great.”

Pinkney, who will graduate this month with a degree in psychology and a minor in sociology, is currently working 50 hours a week at two jobs: one as an associate for a financial services organization in downtown San Jose, and another as a tutor and mentor of at-risk girls through an Oakland-based organization.

She plans to take the Law School Administration Test (LSAT) in September, and said she is thinking about going to law school.

Saucedo, a recent SJSU graduate, called Pinkney a “people person” and said her personality lends itself to her career choices.

ATHLETE: DAMAJA JONES

Linebacker’s graduation his biggest play

MARK POWELL

STAFF WRITER

Graduating senior football player Damaja Jones said his fumble recovery in San Jose State University’s 20-12 victory over the University of New Mexico in the inaugural New Mexico Bowl last December was his defining moment as an athlete.

During a goal-line stand in the game’s second quarter with the Spartans leading 7-0, linebacker Matt Castelo’s helmet knocked the ball loose from New Mexico running back Rodney Ferguson’s arms.

The ball popped into the air and into Jones’ hands, and he returned the ball to midfield, swinging the momentum heavily in SJSU’s favor.

But as important as the play was, the former linebacker said he doesn’t

want that play to define him.

“Graduating will stick with me most,” said Jones, a Helix High School graduate and native of San Diego. “It’s been part of a long journey.”

Though Jones said that moments on the football field would always be special to him, he acknowledged that some of his greatest memories at SJSU were made in the classroom and while living on campus in the dorms.

Jones, a sociology major, said he now lives in an off-campus apartment with friends he met while living in Washburn Hall in 2002. None of them are football players, Jones said.

“Damaja was like an older brother to me,” teammate Castelo said. “He showed me what it took to be a real student of the game and, most importantly, a better person.”

SJSU senior marketing major Le-

ticia Thompson, Jones’ girlfriend of five years, said she and Jones started dating the summer before they left San Diego to attend SJSU.

They are both graduating this year, Thompson said. Jones said playing football would no longer be a priority once he graduates.

“I want to do something in law enforcement,” Jones said. “Maybe in border security or homeland security or something.”

Jones said he might consider playing in the Arena Football League or the Canadian Football League someday but believed his competitive football days were probably behind him.

“He’s dedicated a lot of his life to football already,” Thompson said. “He has goals outside of football. He has dreams he wants to pursue, and I stand behind him 100 percent.”

Many teachers at SJSU helped Jones reach his goal of graduation, he said, most notably African-American studies professor Steven Millner.

“He was big on education,” Jones said. “He didn’t show any favoritism or dislike for anyone. He made you earn it.”



PHOTO COURTESY SJSU ATHLETICS

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Crossword puzzle grid with clues and previous puzzle solved section.

Sudoku puzzle grid with difficulty level 3 (of 5).

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Blues- San Jose City Council members Williams, Liccardo, Oliverio attend Blues Festival

Continued from page 1

San Jose City Council members Forrest Williams, Sam Liccardo, and Pierluigi Oliverio were on hand to issue a proclamation by Mayor Chuck Reed that May 7-13 for this year was indeed “Blues Week” in San Jose.

“This is what we need more critically than anything else,” Liccardo said, “a downtown, open-air environment where people can enjoy an event and one another. If we could do this every weekend, we should.”

One of the most memorable moments occurred when Guy left the stage and walked around to one side of the audience and motioned with his finger for a small female child to walk up to him.

The child did, and Guy bent over, gingerly taking the girl’s hand and using it to play his guitar as she smiled widely.

Guy returned to the stage but wasn’t done mingling with the crowd during his set.

Minutes later, the audience barricade at the front of the stage was opened, and Guy and three security guards strolled through the middle of the crowd while he played and sang to delighted fans.

“My band’s going to have to watch me,” Guy said upon returning to the stage for a second time, “because I don’t know what the hell I’m going to do next.”

As his time on stage drew to a close, Guy tossed guitar picks into the crowd, one of which was nabbed by San Jose resident Cudahy Flautt after a mad scramble with several other concertgoers.

“I went for it and snagged it out of the air after it bounced around,” Flautt said.

An inscription on the white guitar pick said, “Can’t Quit the Blues.”

Josh Calabrese, a junior majoring in marketing, happened upon the Blues Festival by accident, he said.

“I was on my way to La Victoria’s for some lunch, and I was like, ‘What’s all this?’” Calabrese said, holding a plate of nachos. “But this is pretty cool.”

Other artists open festival for San Jose crowd

Though most of the buzz generated by the show centered on Guy, five other artists played over the six-hour period that led up to the finale.

Local act The Lara Price Band opened the show around 12 p.m. to a crowd that was already a few thousand strong.

“A lot of people are here to support us and that’s cool,” Price said.

Price said that she didn’t mind being the first band to play and was excited that her name would appear on the same merchandise as Guy’s

“Just to have my name on the same bill as Buddy Guy’s is worth it,” Price said. “My parents can wear a shirt with Buddy Guy’s name and my name on it. I’m feeling good about that.”

The J.C. Smith Band was the second act to play but had to leave a couple hours after their set because they were playing another show in Monterey that night, Smith said.

“The crowd’s great, everything’s great,” Smith said about the Blues Festival. “The sound was great and the energy level was up.”

San Jose resident Roger Cuadra said he came to this year’s festival to see the third act, Jason Ricci and New Blood.

“He’s amazing,” Cuadra said about Ricci.

Jimmy Thackery & The Drivers and Sista Monica were the last two acts before Guy took the stage.

“I love this festival,” Thackery said. “It’s another beautiful day in San Jose, a great place for the blues.”

For Sista Monica, who was decked out in a sharp purple-and-red dress and gold hoop earrings, it was her first Metro Fountain Blues Festival appearance since overcoming cancer in 2004, according to her Web site.

“It’s great,” Sista Monica said. “Last time I was here I was completely bald.

But now I’ve got hair and some good energy.”

Some of Sista Monica’s band members wore shirts with text on the back reading, “She’s Blues, She’s Soul, She’s Gospel, and She Rocks!”

Lead singer acts as paramedic

Though some artists left the festival early to play at other shows Saturday night, Lara Price of The Lara Price

Band took on the role of temporary paramedic.

Price said she was ordering food from the Peggy Sue’s concession tent when one of the cooks turned toward her and she noticed blood flowing from his arm “like a fountain.”

Price said she quickly grabbed a towel and tied it around the cook’s arm to try to stop the bleeding, then ran to find paramedics.

“It was gruesome,” she said.

Clifton Gold, Associated Students event staff member, said that he contacted University Police Department officials to get an ambulance on the scene.

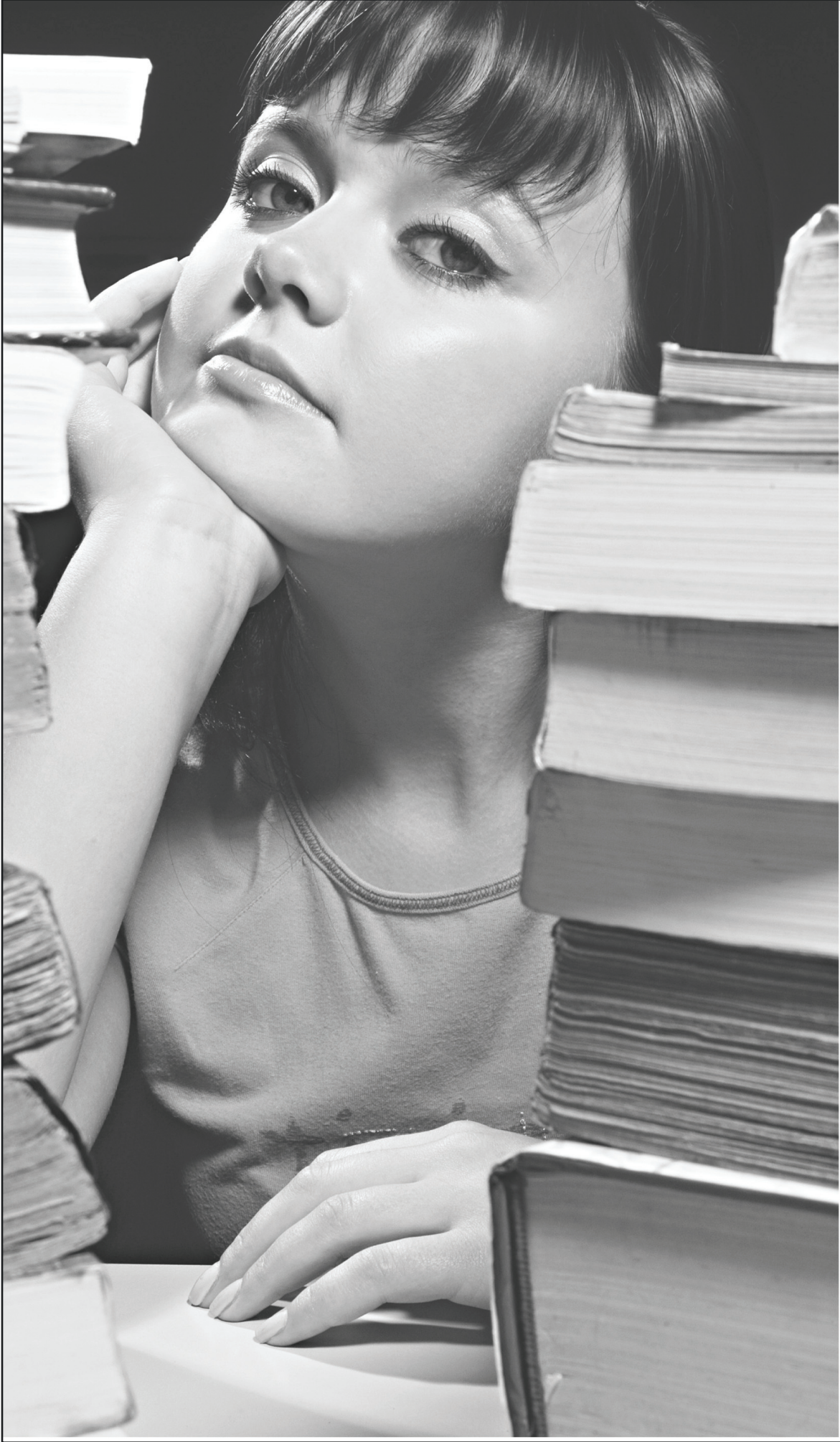
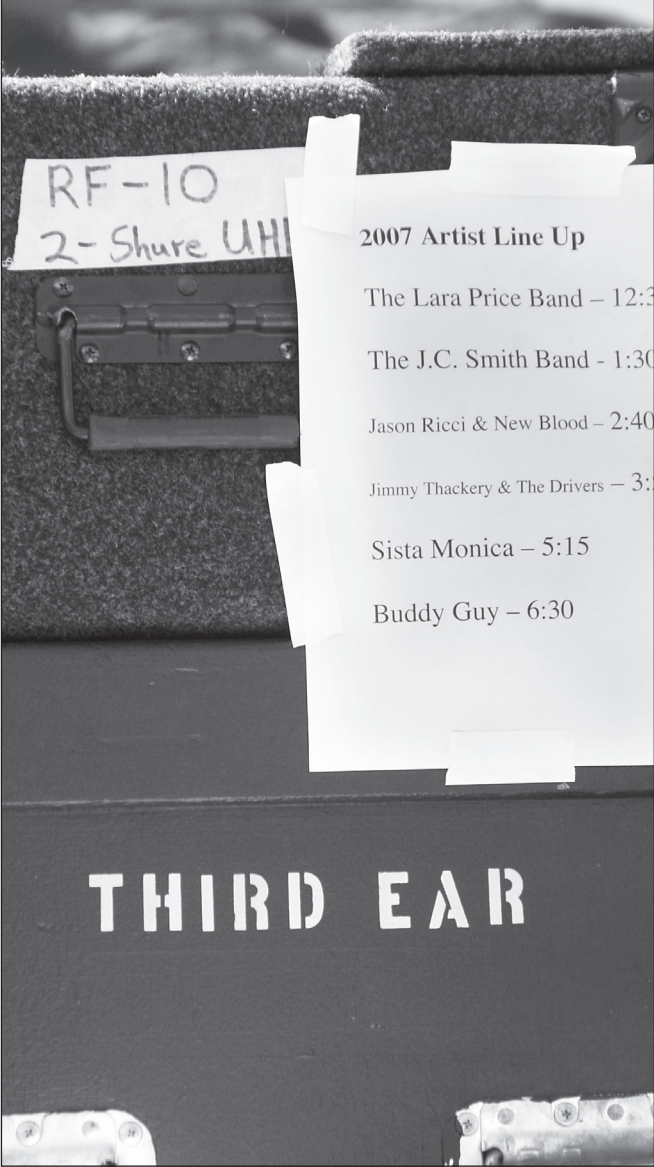
Price said she wasn’t sure what the cook cut himself with, but it may have been a knife or a sharp metal nacho cheese can.

A.S. officials said they could not verify the cook’s condition as of Sunday, but that he had been taken to the hospital and appeared that he would recover quickly.



PHOTOS BY HANNA THRASHER/
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

LEFT: Legendary blues musician Buddy Guy preformed Saturday at the 27th annual Metro Fountain Blues Festival. RIGHT: The artist line-up for the Fountain Blues Festival. BELOW: About 7,000 people attended the 27th annual Metro Fountain Blues Festival at San Jose State University Saturday.



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